

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested. It is also noted that claims 2, 5, 9, 13, 15 and 18 still appear to be pending. However, Applicants requested in the previous amendment filed on May 23, 2007 that these claims be canceled without prejudice. Thus, if not already done, Applicants again request that claims 2, 5, 9, 13, 15 and 18 be canceled herewith without prejudice.

I. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1, 3, 6, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 19 have each been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that which Applicants regard as their invention. In particular, claims 1, and 12 have been amended to further clarify that the absorption assembly comprises a single chamber and the two absorption stages share a processing space within the single absorption chamber, the anneal assembly comprises a single chamber and the two anneal stages share a processing space within the single anneal chamber, and the cooling assembly comprises a single chamber and the two cooling stages share a processing space within the single cooling chamber. Moreover, claims 2, 5, 9, 13, 15 and 18 have been canceled herewith without prejudice.

Support for the above amendments may be found throughout the specification as originally filed. No new matter has been added by virtue of this amendment.

II. 35 U.S.C. 103(a) Rejections

Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,816,098 to Davis ("the Davis patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,909,994 to Blum et al. ("the Blum patent").

In response, it is respectfully asserted that the combination of Davis and Blum fails to teach or suggest all of the features recited in claims 1 and 12, as amended.

As noted above, claims 1 and 12 have been amended to further clarify that the absorption assembly comprises a single chamber and the two absorption stages share a processing space within the single absorption chamber, the anneal assembly comprises a single chamber and the two anneal stages share a processing space within the single anneal chamber, and the cooling assembly comprises a single chamber and the two cooling stages share a processing space within the single cooling chamber.

The combination of Davis and Blum at the very least fails to teach or suggest a remote plasma enhanced cleaning apparatus which includes an absorption assembly, anneal assembly and a cooling assembly disposed in a main process chamber, and wherein the absorption assembly comprises a single chamber and the two absorption stages share a processing space within the single absorption chamber, the anneal assembly comprises a single chamber and the two anneal stages share a processing space within the single anneal chamber, and the cooling assembly comprises a single chamber and the two cooling stages share a processing space within the single cooling chamber, as essentially recited in amended claims 1 and 12

As conceded by the Examiner, Davis fails to teach or suggest two stages (absorption, annealing or cooling) in a single processing chamber. **(See page 3 of the instant Office Action).** Furthermore, Applicants submit that even if Blum reference were combined with Davis, this combination would still fail to teach or suggest all of the features recited in amended claims 1 and 12.

In contrast, the Blum patent does not teach or suggest providing a single absorption chamber which includes two absorption stages which share a processing space within the single absorption chamber, a single anneal chamber which includes two anneal stages which share a processing space within the single anneal chamber and a single cooling chamber which includes two cooling stages which share a processing space within the single cooling chamber, as required by amended claims 1 and 12.

Rather, Blum includes a tandem process chamber 106 having two processing regions 618, 620 in a chamber body 602 as shown in the Figs. 18-19. However, as shown in Fig. 19, the first processing region 618 and the second processing region 620 are physically separated from one another into essentially separate processing compartments. Consequently, Blum does not

teach or suggest providing two stages (absorption, anneal, cooling) which share a processing space within a single chamber (absorption, anneal, cooling, respectively).

Thus, even if Davis and Blum were combined, this combination at the very least would still fail to teach or suggest a remote plasma enhanced cleaning apparatus which includes an absorption assembly, anneal assembly and a cooling assembly disposed in a main process chamber, and wherein the absorption assembly comprises a single chamber and the two absorption stages share a processing space within the single absorption assembly, the anneal assembly comprises a single chamber and the two anneal stages share a processing space within the single anneal assembly, and the cooling assembly comprises a single chamber and the two cooling stages share a processing space within the single cooling chamber, as essentially recited in amended claims 1 and 12. Therefore, for at least the reasons set forth above, withdrawal of the above rejection to claims 1 and 12 is respectfully requested. As claims 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11 depend from claim 1 and claims 14, 16, 17, 19 and 20 depend from claim 12, withdrawal of rejections to these dependent claims is likewise requested.

III. CONCLUSION:

In summary, applicants respectfully submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Early notice to that end is earnestly solicited.

If a telephone conference would be of assistance in furthering prosecution of the subject application, applicant requests that the undersigned be contacted at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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